May [XX], 2020

The Honorable Toni Atkins

President pro Tempore, California State Senate

California State Capitol, room 205

Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Anthony Rendon

Speaker, California State Assembly

California State Capitol, room 219

Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Special District COVID-19 Fiscal Impacts and Request for Access to Fiscal Assistance**

Dear Senator Atkins and Assembly Member Rendon,

On behalf [District name], I thank you for your leadership and consideration of the budgetary impacts resulting from COVID-19 state and local governments collectively face. [District name] is an [district type] that provides [summarize your services] to the communities of [name who you serve or describe the population you serve].

I respectfully request your support of special districts being included in any economic relief determinations for local government. Special districts, like our partners at cities and counties, are delivering essential services to our communities. However, unlike cities and counties, special districts have not been included in federal stimulus funding or given access to financial tools.

Special districts seek the partnership of state and federal leaders to be granted access to fiscal assistance and financial tools to help rebound from the steep economic impacts of COVID-19 response, so that we may continue to stand ready against the next disaster and fulfill our mission to provide the resilient, consistent vital local services California communities rely upon.

Across California, independent special districts like mine are on the front lines of COVID-19 response ensuring the delivery of critical local services that impact the quality of life in their community such as [insert your district service if not yet listed,] health care delivery, first response, mosquito abatement and vector control, recreation and parks, and cultural and community centers and operating vital infrastructure such as roads, water, waste management, harbors and ports, airports, transit services, levees, and electricity, among others.

And, across California, districts like mine are experiencing budgetary impacts from the COVID-19 health crisis. Statewide, by June 2021 76% of special districts throughout the state – which represents 1500 local governments – will experience significant budget challenges or cashflow issues. Within the next six months, 42% of special districts statewide will draw down reserves to mitigate budget impacts with 42% still needing to cut or decrease staff and 35% needing to cut service levels to their communities. The estimated overall fiscal impact of COVID-19 to special districts as of May 2020 is approximately $250 million, with $167million in direct revenue lost and $80 million in additional unbudgeted expenditures for emergency management.

[Insert what your district revenue loss and COVID expenditures have been and what your district has done to manage the budget challenges presented by COVID19, including if your district has already or will utilize reserves, and if you have or anticipate needing to cut or decrease staff or service levels.]

[If you have a compelling story about how your district has been impacted by reduced revenues or how your district has adapted operations to meet this moment and the needs of your community during COVID-19 please briefly share it.]

As the State addresses the unmet needs and service gaps we will be facing in communities across California, it is imperative State leaders consider the essential role of special districts and the impacts COVID-19 has had on our ability to sustain and maintain services.

If you have questions or would like to further discuss any of the above, I welcome the opportunity to assist your efforts in any way possible. Please do not hesitate to contact me at [phone number and email].

Sincerely,

[name, title]

CC: The Honorable Gavin Newsom, Governor of California
[stuart.thompson@gov.ca.gov]

The Honorable Holly Mitchell, Chair, California Senate Budget Committee [luan.huynh@sen.ca.gov]

The Honorable Phil Ting, Chair, California Assembly Budget Committee [irene.ho@asm.ca.gov]

The Honorable [your Senator]

The Honorable [your Assembly Member]

Keely Bosly, Director of the California Department of Finance
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Alyssa Silhi, Legislative Representative, California Special Districts Association [advocacy@csda.net]